

## REMARKS

This preliminary amendment cancels claims 1-18 and adds new claims 19-24.

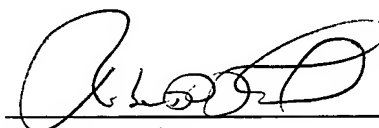
In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that all of the pending claims are in condition for immediate allowance. An early allowance is therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

Rutan & Tucker, LLP

Dated: March 1, 2004

By: \_\_\_\_\_



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